

## Interpreting and Employing Lexile

How do I raise student reading ability? Research and observation have documented the increase in the number of students who struggle to read and comprehend text in the college and career worlds. Teachers struggle with the tasks of developing appropriate grade level reading skills, making sure students are prepared to read and understand formal assessment text, and ignite student desire to read. We know that students must read, read, and read some more in order to attain the proficient reader profile necessary for success in mastering the Common Core Standards and reaching college and career readiness. The level of text must steadily increase in complexity as students progress through school. The question then becomes how do we achieve all goals in support of the successful student?

Grade Band	Current Lexile Band	"Stretch" Lexile Band*
K-1	N/A	N/A
2-3	450L-725L	420L-820L
4-5	645L-845L	740L-1010L
6-8	860L-1010L	925L-1185L
9-10	960L-1115L	1050L-1335L
11-CCR	1070L-1220L	1185L-1385L

Lexile® Framework as designed by MetaMetrics provides valuable insights into student readiness as it measures both text complexity and reader ability on the same developmental scale. Lexile measures are a widely used reading metric because they allow for students to be matched with materials that provide the right level of challenge for their ability and goals, but Lexile should always be considered only as a single, albeit important, part of a three part system of text complexity evaluation. Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* should not be read in 3rd grade even though it is measured at 680, Conversely, it should certainly never be excluded from high school literature classes because of the same measurement.

The Lexile Framework has been aligned to match the Common Core Standards' text complexity grade bands. These Common Core "stretch" bands of the Lexile Framework show an upward trajectory of reading comprehension development through the grades to detail increasing text complexity understanding of all students as they move toward college and career readiness no later than the end of high school. The Lexile bands displayed above (and which is also available on the DOE website and at [http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix\\_A.pdf](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_A.pdf)

can be used as a guide to help teachers and parents identify appropriate texts for each grade band and also texts that would stretch literacy skills and provide gains in reading ability. Students must have successful experience reading and comprehending texts within the appropriate Common Core "stretch" Lexile band each year. This will be essential to successful formal assessment scores and passage to the end goal of college and career ready.

The third part of the Common Core model for measuring text complexity would take into account the reader's motivation, knowledge, and experience as well as the identified task. Qualitative measures and the individual reader are other factors that should be considered in the choice of texts. Newer research has combined quantitative and qualitative information regarding texts. Recognize that the level of support provided during reading and reader motivation have an impact on the reading experience. We also know that students motivated to read about a topic are often able to read text at a higher level than would be forecasted by the reader's Lexile measure. Conversely, a high Lexile score does not mean that a student would be able read and comprehend the text at that level. In order to achieve the overarching goal of getting students to read on their own, there has to be a mix of appropriate Lexile leveled texts, personal interest, and choice of subject matter to support cross curricular areas and standards.

How do you judge a book? Common Core guidance details a three-part model for measuring text complexity. One should look at qualitative dimensions of text or those aspects measurable by "an attentive human reader, such as levels of meaning or purpose; structure; language conventionality and clarity; and knowledge demands" (Common Core Appendix A). A second measure looks at quantitative dimensions. The

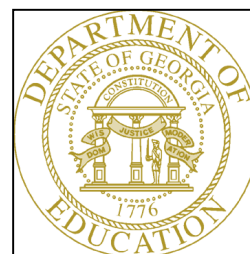


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**GeorgiaStandards.Org ELA Page:**  
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